



## **MONTANA STATE HOSPITAL POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

### **INFECTION CONTROL – CARE OF CONTAMINATED ARTICLES OF CLOTHING & LINEN**

**Effective Date:** December 18, 2002

**Policy #:** IC-07

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- I. PURPOSE:** To identify methods for handling clothing and linen contaminated with bloodborne pathogens, other disease causing organisms, or parasites.
- II. POLICY:** Contaminated personal articles and linen will be decontaminated before they are returned to the patient or to the unit.
- III. DEFINITIONS:** None
- IV. RESPONSIBILITIES:**
  - A. Nursing Staff – In cases of contaminated clothing, nursing staff are responsible for care of patient clothing items.
  - B. Housekeeping Manager is responsible for collection and decontamination of non-washable contaminated or infested articles.
- V. PROCEDURE:**
  - A. Laundry contaminated with blood and body fluids:
    - 1. Any employee handling contaminated laundry will observe Standard Precautions; wearing protective gloves and a protective gown.
    - 2. Contaminated linen will be bagged separately from personal items using the same procedure as for personal items (see #3 below).
    - 3. Nursing personnel will:
      - a. First sort personal laundry items into washable and non-washable piles. Care will be taken to separate items requiring dry cleaning (e.g., a wool sweater or leather coat).
      - b. Wipe non-washable items such as restraint belts, leather shoes, belts and wallets with approved disinfectant solution.

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- c. Sort washable items into light and darks which will be kept separate throughout the laundry process.
    - d. Make a duplicate itemized list of all patient's personal contaminated items. Items on the lists should match the items in each bag.
    - e. First, place separated washable articles in clear, plastic, dissolvable bag. (Items bagged together will be disinfected together regardless of the consequences.)
    - f. Then, place dissolvable bag into a red plastic bag. **Do not overfill plastic bags.**
    - g. Attach one copy of the itemized list to the corresponding bag of laundry and put the other copy in the ward file.
    - h. Place the red-bagged contaminated laundry in the soiled laundry room on each unit.
  4. Laundry personnel remove the itemized list and mark the red bag "contaminated" and indicate the unit of origin.
  5. Contaminated linen and washable personal laundry will be sent to the laundry service at Montana State Prison.
- B. Non-washable items contaminated with lice or other parasites
1. Nursing personnel will:
    - a. Make a duplicate itemized list of infested non-washable items and put one copy in the ward file.
    - b. Double red bag infested non-washable items and attach one copy of the itemized list.
    - c. Infested non-washable items include: restraint belts, wallets, leather belts, and shoes.
    - d. Send the infested items to the Housekeeping Manager.
    - e. Housekeeping Manager or designee will spray the inside of the bag(s) and contaminated articles with the appropriate decontaminate. The bag and contents must be left for 24 hours, then will be emptied and returned to the unit.

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Medical Director